(b) what is the amount in foreign exchange earned by such units during the years 1986-87, and 1987-88, till the end/ of December, 1987.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) Copies of the publication containing names of the members/manufacturing exporters, who are registered with the Apparel Export Promotion Council as on 7.8.1987 is available in the Parliament Library.

(b) State-wise exports statistics are not maintained.

Establishment of a Free Trade Zone at Visakhapatnam

107. PROF . C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased tt state:

(a) what progress has been made so far in the establishment of a Free Trade Zone at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) by when the work in this regard is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) and (b) Government have agreed in principle to the location of a possible Export Processing Zone at Visakhapatnam. The modalities of implementing the possibility have to be worked out having regard to the relevant techno-economic considerations. It is not possible to indicate a time limit in this regard at this stage.

Forest Cover

108. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Mnister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) how much of additional land has been brought under forests since 1980;

(b) by when Government hope to bring about a favourable ratio between forests and non-forest land in the country; and

(c) what specific steps Government propose to take to increase the area under forests in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Afforestation over 9.4 million hectare has been carried over since 1980 to Dec., 1987.

(b) Government is keen to bring about a favourable ratio between forest and non-ofrest land in the country as early as possible. It is not possible to indicate a specific time at this stage because of the complexities involved.

(c) Government has constituted National Wastelands Development Board with the object of boosting the afforestation work in the country and to develop people's involvement in afforestation.

Issue of Licences to Dry Fruit Dealers

109. SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA:
SHRI J. P. GOYAL.

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that with the import regulations prohibiting the new dealers to get into the business of importing dry fruits, a good number of licences issued to the dry frut importers are sold at a premium on letter of autholetter of authority without corresponding liability of pay tax;

(b) if so, whether Government have conducted any inquiry into such malpractices; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, what is the outcome thereof stating the estimated annual loss suffered by the Exchequer as a result thereof and the corrective measures contemplated by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI) : (a) to (c) Under the current Import Policy and procedures,

a licence holder can appoint another person as his agent for arranging the imports permitted by the licence. The functions of such holders of letter of authority are limited to placing orders, opening letters of credit, making remittance of payment for importing the goods, arranging movement and clearing the same through the customs having regard to Sec. 147 of the Customs Act, 1962 on behalf of the licences. However, sale of import licences for dry fruits is not allowed and any violation in this regard is dealt with in accordance with the provisions contained in Imports & Exports (Control) Act, 1947 and Imports (Control) Order 1955.

Issue of Import-Export Pass Books

110. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the criterion adopted by Government is issuing the Import-Export Pass Book in 1986; and

(b) what was the number of parties which were issued such pass books along with the value of the same periodwise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) During the year 1986, the Import-Export Pass Book Scheme was applicable only to registered manufacturer-exporters who have been in production and exporting regularly for a period of three financial years.

(b) The numbered value of Pass Book licence issued is as under:

Period	No. of licences	Value (in crores of rupees)
1986-87	101	24.90
1-4-87 to 30-9-87 (Six months)	78	26.91

Reduction of excise duty on nylon fabrics

111. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reduced the excise duty on nylon fabrics; if so, the extent thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) what criteria have been adopted in taking this decision; and

(c) what gain has accrued to Government by the reduction of excise duty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) to (c) Government have reduced the excise duty on cheaper varieties of nylon fabrics of weight not exceeding 35 grams per square metre from Rs. 1.25 to 75 paise per square metre with effect from the 19th January, 1988. This duty edruction was made taking into account the representations received from the industry and also taking note of the fact that the duty incidence on cheaper varieties of nylon fabrics had gone up under the new excise duty structure on man-made fabrics introduced with effect from the 25th November, 1987. This is only a modification of the duty structure announced on the 25th November, 1987 and therefore the question of any gain accruing to the Government does not arise.

News-item captioned 'U.S. Co. dumped toxic wastes in India'

112. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item that appeared in Business Standard dated 14th January, 1988 under the caption 'US Co. dumped toxic wastes in India'; if so, what are the details thereof; and